(b) if so, whether it is a fact that since February, 1993, TEC has been receiving only about 500 MT per day as reported in the 'Observer', New Delhi of August 10, 1993; if so, what are the reasons for the cut of gas suply to TEC;

(c) whether due to fuel shortage TEC had a breakdown of power by 5 million units during the year 1992-93;

(d) whether this fall in generation affects its supply to Railways, Bombay Municipal Corporation and Bhabha Atomic Research Centre; and

(e) if so what steps the ONGC have taken or propose to take to restore the required gas supply to TEC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The supply was reduced in some of the months but not below 940 MT/day.

(c) to (e) TEC has the capability to use liquid furl (LSHS) and coal to make up for shortage of natural gas.

Opening of LPG Agencies and Petrol Pumps in Tamil Nadu

4077. SHRI S. AUSTIN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received some applications for opening the LPG agencies and petrol pumps in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, places from where such demands have been received; and

(c) the decision taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) to (c) Requests are received from time to time from various parts of the country including Tamil Nadu for setting up and allotment of Retail Outlet dealerships and LPG distributorships. After survey, locations meeting the Industry norms are included in the Marketing Plans for opening of dealerships/distibutorships. Accordingly, 96 retail outlet and 44 LPG distributorship proposals have been included in the current Marketing Plans, for Tamil Nadu.

Selection for appointment of Retail Outlet dealers/LPG distributors is made by an Oil Selection Board through interview of persons applying against advertisements and meeting eligibility criteria.

Selection of dealers/distributors is in progress.

Response of MNCs to Oil Exploration

4078. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the response of multi-national for oil exploration auctions has been very poor; if so, reasons thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that one of the reasons of lukewarm response is invironmental condition; and

(c) whether environment protection condition will be elaborately stipulated in the tenders; if so, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) The response of multinational companies for oil exploration in the country has been satisfactory keeping in view the current climate for investment in exploration activities in the international market.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The conditions for environment protection are included in the production sharing contracts, in line with current inter-national standards.

Meeting of CMs of southern states regarding southern gas grid

4079. SHRI M. A. BABY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any meeting of the Chief Ministers from the Southern States has been held where they had consultation in about the implementation of the Southern gas grid, if so, the details thereof;

(b) what is the present state of the Southern gas grid proposal; and

(c) what are the future plans with the time frame with regard to the implementation of Southern gas grid?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) to (c) The concept of laying a